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XI.—CHAUCER'S *PRIORESSES TALE* AND ITS ANALOGUES.

It is now thirty years ago that three stories, more or less closely related to the *Prioresses Tale*, were printed in the Chaucer Society's *Originals and Analogues*. Since that time but little new light has been thrown on the source used by Chaucer for this Tale. The general opinion has been that Chaucer followed some version of the legend not now known, though Professor Skeat in his most recent discussion of the subject takes the view that the *Prioresses Tale* is the result of a combination, probably by Chaucer himself, of two miracles of Our Lady related by Gautier de Coincy: that of the boy killed by the Jew, and that of the wicked cleric in whose mouth after death a miraculous flower was found.¹

It is the purpose of the present article to bring together a number of additional analogues to Chaucer's story in an attempt to define a little more closely than has hitherto been possible the form of the legend which he must have had before him. For—if I may anticipate my conclusions to this extent—I believe that Chaucer's immediate source was a version of the legend still unknown to us.

The analogues which follow are arranged, so far as possible, in chronological succession. For the sake of completeness I have inserted in their proper order references to the versions already published in *Originals and Analogues*.

1. Cæsarius of Heisterbach, *Libri VIII Miraculorum*, Ed. A. Meister, Römische Quartalschrift, Rom 1901, pp. 189–91.

¹ *Academy*, London, Sept. 1, 1894, p. 153, and Sept. 15, p. 195; cf. *Oxford Chaucer*, Vol. V, p. 491.

Lib. III, No. 67. De scholari, quem iudaei pro cantu de sancta Maria occiderunt, quem beata Maria iterum vivificabat.

Quidam scholaris diligebat multum beatam virginem Mariam, qui consuetus erat de ipsa cantare, quidquid dulcius invenire poterat. Qui habebat hanc consuetudinem: Quotiens de scholis rediens vel ad scholas veniens quod stare solebat ante domum unius iudaei, "Salve regina" vel sequentiam "Ave praeclara" cantabat. Quod iudaeus supra modum aegre ferens et valde iratus scholarem pro cantare durius arguebat et saepius increpabat rogans puerum, ut a domo sua recederet et consuetum dimitteret. Quod puer omnino recusans saepius cantum, "Salve regina" "Ave Maria" iterabat. Tempore parvo transacto dum scholares etiam hieme in crepusculo noctis de schola venerunt et ad propria tecta regressi sunt, scholaris ille solus domum vadens et socios suos deserens ante domum praefati iudaei transiens et more solito cum magna laetitia coepit cantare "Salve regina" cum sequentia "Ave praeclara." Iudaeus vero ad iram provocatus domo exiens scholarem accepit et cum amicis suis hunc puerum interficere voluit. Qui iudaeus collum pueri ita stringens in captione, quod puer clamare non poterat, iudaei vero in vicino commorantes ad domum praefati iudaei convolantes consilium inierunt, quomodo puerum interficere possent. Qui puerum accipientes et in secreto loco super tabulam postea eum posuerunt et cum funibus eum ligaverunt dicentes ei, si cessare vellet a cantu, ipsum non interficerent. Puer irridens dixit, quamdiu viveret, a cantu beatae Mariae virginis non cessare posset, et hoc etiam iudaeis dixit, quod si possibile esset, quoniam membra verterentur in linguas, matrem misericordiae vellem cum cantu laudare. Iudaei hoc audientes furore repleti linguam suam absciderunt. Corpus vero suum ubi equi stare solebant, ibi sub fimo sepelierunt. Hoc facto mater vero pueri de mane ad scholas veniens puerum suum requirens, magister vero cum scholaribus ei responderunt se nihil de puero scire, tandem unus scholaris dixit, quod omni fere nocte solebat stare ante ianuam unius iudaei et ibi "Salve regina" cum "Ave Maria" solitus cantare. Tunc magister coepit cogitare, quod iudaei puerum interemissent, statim sine mora ad iudicem, ad consiliarios aggrediens et eis mentionem de puero faciens. Qui statim omnes ad domum iudaei euntes ei de puero, quoniam ad ianuam suam devote "Salve regina" cum "Ave Maria" consuetus cantare erat, mentionem facientes, iudaei vero cum iuramento de puero se excusabant. Illi vero verbis iudaeorum non credentes domum intrant et diligenter investigant. Scholares [nec] non cum civibus civitatis puerum adclamabant. Puer vero sub fimo illis respondebat. Illi vero statim puerum extraxerunt, in vultu roseo quasi inter lilia bene redolentia sedentem eum invenerunt. Post hoc vero puer recitavit eis per ordinem, quomodo beata virgo Maria eum custodivit et ipsum in omnibus membris suis sanavit et a periculo mortis liberavit.

Iudaei vero de tanto miraculo stupefacti omnes sunt baptizati et ad fidem Christi conversi. Gratias egerunt deo et beatam virginem Mariam cum magno tripudio de sua misericordia laudaverunt.¹

2. Gautier de Coincy, *Miracles de la Sainte Vierge*, cf. *Originals and Analogues*, pp. 251 ff.

3. Paris Bibl. Nat., ms. lat. 18,134 (fol. 108 ff.)

No. 31 (fol. 142 dorso):—

Exemplum de puero qui frequenter cantabat scilicet Gaude maria.

Fuit quidam puer qui clericus erat et beatam uirginem magno affectu diligebat. Pauper erat et pauperem matrem habebat. Sed canonici multa bona ei et matri eius propter Christum faciebant. Optime enim cantabat et fere ab omnibus libenter audiebatur. Responsum autem de beate uirgine scilicet Gaude maria libentissime cantabat. Quadam ergo die cum illud responsum per uicum quendam cantaret eundo. Iudeus qui in illo uico manebat audiens eum beatam uirginem attollentem et iudeos in suo similiter cantu increpantem, sicut in illo responso continetur ultra modum iratus est. Et uocans in domum suam illum puerum qui sic cantabat securi eum percussit in capite et occidit eum. Et post hec cum in domo sua eum sepelisset ostium suum aperuit tamquam nichil mali fecisset. Sed cum mater filium suum uespere non uidisset ad se sicut solebat reuertentem mirata est ubi esset. Et eadem die cum filium per diuersa loca quereret uenit in illum uicum ubi filius suus occisus fuerat. Et cum ante ostium illius iudei mater predicta cum multis amicis suis ad querendum filium suum transiret audiuit puerum suum clara uoce cantantem responsum illud Gaude maria. Et introeuntes quesierunt a iudeo ubi puer ille erat. Et cum iudeus negaret illum ibi esse fodit mater et amici eius terram et puerum sub terra uiuum reppererunt. Et cum mater interrogaret eum, fili quid faciebas sub terra? dixit ei quomodo iudeus ille eum occiderat et sub terra posuerat. Sed quadam pulchra domina, inquit, ad me uenit que matrem dei se esse dicebat et rogauit me quod responsum suum cantarem sicut solebam. Ad quam uocem ego cepi cantare Gaude maria et me uiuum et sanum reperi. Hec cum audisset mater deum et matrem eius laudauit. Et cum propositi ciuitatis istum casum audissent, illum iudeum qui hoc fecerat interfecerunt et omnes alios iudeos de illa ciuitate expulerunt.²

¹ Attention was first called to the fact that this *Libri VIII Miraculorum* contained an analogue to the Prioresses Tale by Professor Max Förster (Herrig's Archiv. Vol. 110, 1903, p. 427).

² This transcript has been made for me through the courtesy of M. Mario Roques.

Paris ms. lat. 18,134 is of the thirteenth century (cf. as to date and con-

4. Thomas Cantimpré, *Bonum universale de Apibus*, Lib. II, cap. xxix, sect. 13 (Ed. G. Colvener, Douay, 1605, p. 289; in the edition of 1597 this story is added by Colvener among his notes, p. 542).

De puero a Iudaeis iugulato, & sub lapide sepulchrali recondito, qui postridie viuus est inuentus.

Dum quidam puer Scholaris, sicut Fratrum Praedicatorum fidelissima relatione didicimus, in odium Iudaeorum per plateas de vespere saepe cantaret : *Erubescat Iudaeus infelix qui dicit Christum ex Ioseph semine esse natum*,¹ Iudaei nocte quadam comprehendentes puerum, iugularunt & in cœmeterio sub cuiusdam sepulchri lapide absconderunt. Mane autem facto, cum mater filium perdidisset, & cum vicinis eum per diuersa loca quaereret, transiens per cœmeterium eiulando clamaret : Fili carissime, vbi te perdidisti, vbi quaeram te ; puer de sub lapide, alta voce clamauit : *Erubescat Iudaeus infelix, &c.* Ad cuius vocem stupefacti quaerentes,

tents of this ms. *Bibl. de l'école des chartes*, Vol. xxxi, 1870, p. 543). This story is summarized by Mussafia, "Studien zu den mittelalt. Marienlegenden," *Sitzungsberichte der phil. hist. Classe der kaiserl. Akad. der Wissensch.*, Wien, 1886, p. 984, who, however, erroneously registers it as No. 28 in the collection. As to the contents of this collection, Mussafia remarks in his third paper (*Akad. der Wissensch.*, 1889, p. 62) : "Ebenfalls für sich steht Par. lat. 18,134, das sich nur im Beginne an sv. (i. e., Paris ms. lat. 14, 463, of the twelfth century), anschliesst, bald aber eine grosse Reihe von Wundern vorführt, von denen manche, trotzdem sie in lateinischen Handschriften—wenigstens in den mir bisher bekannten—selten oder gar nicht vorkommen, in die Vulgärdichtung eindringen."

¹ This line, *Erubescat Iudaeus infelix*, identifies the response sung by the young scholar with the *Gaude Maria* mentioned in other versions. The full text of this response is given by Mr. G. F. Warner in his edition of Mielot, and I avail myself of his note : "The complete response, which is said to have been composed by Robert II, King of France (997-1031), is as follows :—

Gaude Maria virgo cunctas hereses sola interemisti
Quae Gabrielis Archangeli dictis credidisti
Dum Virgo Deum et hominem genuisti
Et post partum Virgo inviolata permanisti.

Versus : Gabrielem archangelum scimus divinitus te esse affatum ;
Uterum tuum de Spiritu sancto credimus impregnatum ;
Erubescat Iudaeus infelix, qui dicit Christum Ioseph semine esse natum."

circumspexerunt, & tandem de sub lapide puerum aduertentes, viuum & incolumem sustulerunt.¹

5. Egerton MS. 1117 (fol. 176 b).

Puer quidam clericus, filius cujusdam pauperulae, cantans peroptime et saepius, cantabat istud responsum Gaude Maria virgo et laetantur. Et quia dicebat Erubescat Iudaeus infelix, ideo Iudaei inuidebant sibi. Accidit quodam die ut transiret ante domum Iudaeorum. Iudaei eum acceperunt et eum iugulaverunt et sub fimo posuerunt in stabulo. Cum mater vero puerum suum quaereret et ante domum Iudaeorum transiret, ita loquebatur ad beatam virginem: 'O beate virgo, ubi est nunc cantor tuus qui dicebat Gaude Marie virgo cum affectu cordis?' Tunc subito puer qui fuerat mortuus, de domo Iudaeorum exiens, dixit: 'Ecce ego sum hic, mater; noli flere.' Et requisitus ubi fuerat, ait: 'Iudaeus ille, inuidens me quia cantabam de beata virgine, iugulavit me et in suo stabulo me sepelivit, sed beata virgo, matris meae commota lacrimis, me modo suscitavit de stabulo.'²

6. Vernon MS., The Paris Beggar-Boy, about 1375 A. D.
Cf. *Originals and Analogues*, pp. 277 ff.

7. Paris Bibl. Nat., ms. lat. 14,857 (fol. 104 ff.),
No. 13 (fol. 110 dorso):—

Presbiter eximiam solitus laudare mariam

Suevit cantare gaude maria scolare

Versum cantante gabrielem uoce sonante

Iudeus in uilla prediues mansit in illa

5 Se reputans dominum quia sciuit forte latinum

Infelicem se esse per uersum putat esse

Non hoc portare potuit cantante scolare

Insidias* tendit quem quondam uespre pendit

Quem demembrauit et sub trabe frustra locauit

10 Nulli scire dedit malefacta sed inde recedit

Cantat in ecclesia consuetum gaude maria

¹ Thomas Cantimpré compiled his *Bonum universale de Apibus* between 1256 and 1263 (cf. Elie Berger, *Thom. Cant. Bonum univ. de Apibus quid illustrandis saeculi XIII. moribus conferat*, Paris, 1895, pp. 15-6).

² I am under obligations to Dr. H. de W. Fuller of Harvard University for copying this text.

This is a MS. of the fourteenth century. It is printed by Warner in his edition of Mielot, p. xvi.

* MS. *insidias*.

- Quod solito more uersumque scholaris ab ore*
Pro dulci uoce quem demembrauit atroce
Quod miser occidit puerum bene viuere uidit
 15 *Admirando satis timet acta sue feritatis*
Eius tecta subit abscondita membra requirit
Vt signum tale clarescat spirituale
Quod pia stella maris fecit nox ipsa scholaris
Plebano dixit nam sic de morte reuixit
 20 *Et probat hoc verum tunc presbiter undique clerum*
Conuocat et laycos actus reserrauit iniquos
Iudei miseri quem iudex vult cito queri
Queritur inuentus reus est in morte retentus
Signa cicatricum pueri dampnant inimicum
 25 *Dum sic conuictus iudeus ait benedictus*
Sis Iesu Christe quoniam uiuit puer iste
Quem demembraui tantum pro uoce suaui
De genetrice dei quam detestantur hebrei
Quam credo vere super omne iuuamen habere
 30 *In Christum credo simul et seruum sibi me do*
Hoc propter signum tam clarum tamque benignum
Tam bona tamque pia nunc constat virgo maria
Quod demembratum sic reddere sic est reparatum
Sic sibi vita datur et sacro fonte lauatur
 35 *Baptismum quero de Christi nomine vero*¹
*Et secum multi sunt Christi nomine fulti.*²

8. Hague Kon. Bibl. ms. X 64 (new number 70, H 42).

Fol. 48 c. :

“Het was een scolier, die woende bi eenre straten, daer Ioden in woenden, ende als hem sijn ouders om bier ende om broet sende[n], soe

¹ One suspects that v. 35 originally followed v. 30.

² This transcript was made for me under the direction of M. Mario Roques, who took much pains in deciphering this difficult ms.

ms. 14,857 is of the end of the fourteenth century (Cf. as to date and contents of this ms. *Bibl. de l'école des chartes*, Series VI, Vol. v, p. 53). Mussafia (*Akad. der Wissensch.*, Wien, 1889, p. 13) remarks as to the character of this miracle collection: “Auf die vielfachen Berührungspunkte mit Cæsarius möge noch einmal hingewiesen werden; es liesse sich vielleicht daraus irgend ein Anhaltspunkt für die Ermittlung der Heimat der kleinen Sammlung gewinnen.” This metrical version is found also in Metz ms. No. 612 (fourteenth to fifteenth century) and in Vatican ms. No. 4318, fifteenth century).

ghinc hi voerbi die Iodenhuus ende sanc dat vers, hoe Gabriël Mariën boetscapte, dat si overmits cracht des heilighen gheest den soen Gods ontfinc, ende dan soe sanc hi: 'Scaemt u, onsalighe Ioden, die segt, dat Ihesus van Ioseph sade gheboren is.' Die Ioden, die daer woenden, die hadden daer grote onghenoechte in ende wachteden dat kint bi avont, ende een Iode riept in, ende doe hijt in sijn huus hadde, doe stac hi hem die keel ontween ende bedalft in sijn huus."

De ouders gingen zoeken en hoorden bij het huis van den Jood "hoers kints stemme," want "het sanc noch dat selve vers, daert lach onder die aerde." Toen het levend in het huis van den Jood was opgegraven, en nog bovendien een litteeken overtuigend bewees, dat er een misdaad gepleegd was, werden de Joden "vanden ghemeenē recht veroerdelt totter doet, mer overmits dat mirakel so begheerdense kersten te worden, ende men lietse leven."¹

9. Johannes Herolt, *De Miraculis beate Virginis* (printed as a third part in his *Sermones de Tempore, cum promptuario exemplorum*, Ed. 1492).

Scholarem a iudeis occisum resuscitavit virgo Maria.
Exemplum LXVI.

Scholaris quidam in ecclesia ubi statutum est quod responsorium Gaude Maria quotidie cum versu Gabrielem, in quo est Erubescat iudeus, etc., iussus est propter vocis sue dulcedinem decantare. Iudei ergo ad vineas suas ante ecclesiam transitum facientes, et ex verbis erubescantiam sustinentes scholarem caute abducunt et in vineis perimunt.

Nox, illis abeuntibus, gloriosa virgo Maria puerum resuscitans, iubet eum suam laudem cum fiducia decantare. Iudei, iterum eandem vocem cognoscentes et audientes, admiratione percussi, secrete perquirunt a puero. Respondit si quidem se ab eis occisum sed per reginam sum pristinae vite restitutus. Hoc cognito, iudei non parvo numero convertunt ad gloriose virginis Marie gloriam.²

¹ As given in somewhat condensed form by Dr. W. A. van der Vet, *Het Bienenboec van Thomas van Cantimpre en zijn Exempelen*, 's-Gravenhage, 1902, pp. 223-4. This MS. is of the fifteenth century.

² I am under obligations to Dr. Robert A. Law of Harvard University for transcribing this exemplum and also for cheerfully looking up other references.

This story is noted by Mussafia, III, p. 50.

In regard to Herolt and his works, cf. the extract from Warton reprinted in *Originals and Analogues*, p. 104. Herolt is there said to have flourished about 1418. He was a Dominican friar of Basel.

10. Alphonsus a Spina,¹ *Fortalicium Fidei*, 1459, Story of *Alfonsus of Lincoln* (Cf. *Originals and Analogues*, pp. 108 ff.)
11. Miracles de Nostre Dame, Collected by Jean Mielot. Reproduced for John Malcom of Poltalloch with Text, Introduction and Annotated Analysis by George F. Warner, M. A., Westminster, 1885 (Roxburghe Club), pp. 14-15.

XIX. Dun jeusne clerc qui bien chantoit et hault Erubescat Judeus, le quel la vierge Marie preserua de mort.

En la cite de Anice, que lon nomme orendroit Le Puis, en Auvergne, fut jadiz vne coustume en leglise quilz aloient tous les samedis de lan a procession entour leglise de la glorieuse vierge Marie. En alant a celle procession ilz faisoient par deux jeusnes filz chanter vng respons qui se commence *Gaude Maria virgo cunctas hereses*, etc., ou quel respons est contenu *Erubescat Judeus infelix*, etc.; et est cest *Erubescat* de moult hault chant. Entre les autres enfans de celle eglise il en y auoit vng qui auoit moult bonne voix et haulte, le quel par coustume chantoit ce respons. Or doncques auprez de celle eglise estoit vne rue, en la quelle demouroient adonques les Juifz. Et aduenoit tousiours, que la clause de ce respons la ou il dit *Erubescat Judeus*, etc., venoit tousiours a point destre chantez en celle procession droittement quant les enfans passoyent au bout de la rue des Juifz, qui les ouoyent ainsi chanter a leur grant vitupre. Auoyent grant dueil et haissoient mortellement les enfans qui communement chantoient ce respons. Auprez dicelle eglise et de la rue des Juifz auoit vng puits grant et parfont, la ou en prenoit et puisoit de leaue pour le service de celle eglise. Entre les Juifz de celle rue estoit vng Juifz qui bien entendoit lattin, et qui mortelement hayssoit ce jeusne filz qui chantoit si bien ce respons, si quil proposa en soy mesmes quil tenroit le jeusne filz sil pouoit, par quelque voye, et contendit pluseurs foiz de trouuer son point de occire et tuer le jeusne filz. Or aduint a vng matin, que ce jeusne clerc deult aidier vng prestre a dire messe en celle eglise; et lors, pour ce quil nauoit point deaue, il ala a ce puis pour puisier de leaue. Le [page 15] Juifz maluaiz et felon, qui veit lenfant a ce puis, qui [quil] hayssoit plus que

¹Alphonsus a Spina, a member of the Franciscan order, was bishop of Orense, Spain. Of the printed editions of the *Fortalicium Fidei* the earliest bearing date appeared at Nuremberg in 1485. According to the British Museum Catalogue, earlier editions were printed at Strassburg (1471?) and at Basel (1475?).

personne du monde, regarde entour luy et ne veit personne. Il se approucha de lenfant hastiement et le reuersa dedens ce puis si secretement que nulz nen sceut riens. Le puis auoit bien de iiiix^{xx}, a c. pas de parfont. Les amis de lenfant, le prestre et les voisins furent les plus esbahis du monde quilz ne le veoyent plus et ne scauoyent quil estoit devenu. Ilz le feirent querir et demander en pluseurs villes, mais trouuer ne le pouoyent. Le prestre morut tantost aprez. Or doncques, quant vint droittement en fin de celle annee, au jour meismes lan reuoulut, que la procession aloit entour leglise, ainsi comme elle lauoit accoustume et quil y auoit vng enfant ou lieu de laultre qui chantoit ce respons, quant vint a monter celle clause, *Erubescat Judeus*, il ne le peult chanter si hault comme il appartenoit. Lors dist le maistre des enfans, "Dieu," dist il, "veuille auoir lame de ton compaignon. Se il fust icy maintenant, il eust bien le respons entonne et chante plus hault que tu ne le puez faire." A pou eust le maistre sa parole finnee, quant tous ceulz de la procession ouyrent lenfant dedens le puis, qui chantoit la clause de ce respons tout hault, ainsi comme il le souloit faire. Ilz le congneurent tout incontinent a sa voix, et lui aualerent vne forte corde et longue et au bout de la corde vne grande seille. Lenfant entre dedens la sielle et fut tirez a mont. Ilz trouuerent que lenfant auoit la teste toute fendue, et quil estoit forment bleciez et tout chargie de sang en pluseurs lieux, si quil auoit pluseurs playes mortelles, dont il fut mort, se celle ne len eust preserue, qui vng an entier le garda vif dedanz le puis. Lon luy demanda comment il cheut en ce puis; il leur respondit, "Je vins ores au matin pour tirer de leaue pour aidier vng tel chappellain a dire messe. Ainsi comme je me fuiz abaissiez pour puisier de leaue, vng tel Juifz (qui [quil] leur nomma) se approucha de moy et me reuersa dedans le puis." Tous ceulz qui lenfant ouyrent parler furent merueilleusement esbahiz tant pour ce quilz le veoyent ainsi naure mortellement, et si nauoit nul quelconque semblant de douleur, comme pour ce quil ne cuidoit auoir este dedans le puis que demi jour seulement, et il ly auoit vng an entier. Le Juifz fut prins, son cas confessa tout incontinent et la cause pour quoy il auoit eu gette lenfant dedens le puis. Son proces fut fait, et fut ars, ne tarda gaires aprez. Quant lenfant fut gairis, il demoura tousiours depuis deuots a la vierge Marie, si que, aprez le trespas de leuesque de celle cite, il en fut euesque par le merite de la vierge Marie.¹

¹ Transcribed for me through the courtesy of Dr. H. deW. Fuller.

Mielot's Collection is found in Douce ms. 374, of which the date of writing was probably not earlier than 1467, a matter which is more or less satisfactorily decided by the frontispiece in the ms. The figure represents, most likely, Charles the Bold, and the arms which he bears indicate that he was then duke—which he became at the date mentioned above. Mielot was secretary to Philip the Good (1396–1467).

12. Speculum Exemplorum, Ed. Strassburg, 1487, Ex Vitis Sanctorum, Distinctio octava, cap. LIX.

Contigit post multa tempora circa hoc idem responsorium 'Gaude maria' aliud quoddam mirabile miraculum. Nam habitabat in confinio cuiusdam capellule iudeus quidam incarnationis dominice sed precipue (sicut et sunt omnes iudei) virginitatis marie extremus inimicus. Erat autem eodem tempore in eadem parrochia scolaris quidam eidem virgini gloriose valde devotus, qui ad honorem dei genitricis, sed precipue in confusionem et opprobrium illius improbi iudei integritatem virginis nequiter impugnantis, hoc duxit in consuetudinem vt inter cetera devotionis exercitia quibus eam venerabat singulis diebus in capellam illam ingressus coram ipsius imagine hoc responsorium flexis genibus decantaret devote.

Audiebat hoc iudeus quotidie et quoniam clericus erat verba intelligens in sui derisum composita ingenti tabescebat invidia. Stridensque in illum dentibus suis observabat si quando solum illum posset invenire quatenus hoc suum opprobrium ipsius occisione terminaret. Et ecce die quadam iuvenem hunc ingressum capellulam iudeus persecutus est et solum illum considerans. 'Nunc,' inquit, 'tante tue insolentie mihique diu iniurie exhibite finem imponam.' Arripiensque iuvenem discidit in frusta sicque per singula membra discisum sub ipsius capelle gradibus sepelivit.

Sed virgo beata, que misericordie sue officium ingratis atque peccatoribus exhibere consuevit, huic fideli suo famulo et martyri in tribulatione non defuit. Sed corpus pro sibi impenso obsequio in frusta discisum recolligens rursus misericorditer vivificavit, precipitque iam vivo ut solitum obsequium exhiberet ei tanto devotius quanto pro exhibitio famulatu copiosius se sensisset adiutum. Mox iuvenis ad altare rediit et idem responsorium solito multo devotius decantavit. Tum autem ad verba illa pervenisset. 'Erubescat iudeus infelix,' cum multa cordis fiducia secundum altitudinem notarum vocem altius plus solito elevabat, ut scilicet altitudine vocis exprimeret magnitudinem gratiarum actionis; et iudeus qui ad delendum marie obsequium et in sue invidie remedium eum occiderat audiens rursum canentem quem credebat occisum amplius veretur, quod et factum est. Nam iudeus audiens illum canentem alium quandam nunc esse suspicatus. Verum tamen venit ut videret atque si alius esset rursus illum occideret. Sed videt et stupet, quia quem ipse se sciebat sepelisse, iam resurrexisse videbat atque ideo se frustra tantum facinus commississe.

Tunc iuvenis ne tam gloriosum miraculum suo silentio celaretur vadens ad pastorem parrochianum singula illi per ordinem narravit, ostendens eidem cicatrices tanquam signa quedam in singulis incisionum locis pro confirmatione miraculi derelicta. Pastor autem pro mirabili hoc divulgando miraculo populum convocavit eisque de dei genitricis misericordia egregium sermonem fecit. Pro cuius confirmatione sermonis iuvenem produxit in medium, et quod circa eum contigisset per singula patefecit. Quod omnis

plebs ut vidit dedit gloriam deo et laudem gloriose virgini matri eius que sibi devotos in sua tribulatione non deserit. Verum cum iudici civitatis hoc idem esset recitatum miraculum comprehendens iudeum pro commisso latrocinio condemnavit, in mortem. Sed iudeus Christianum se fieri toto corde desideravit, et sic vitam obtinens eius virginitatem studuit conatu toto defendere quam noscebat pruis impie et pertinaciter impugnasse. Legitur in historia annunciationis beate virginis.¹

13. Pelbartus de Themeswar, *Stellarium Corone beate virginis*, Lib. XII, pars ultima, cap. 1 (Fol. cxxxvi dors. in ed. Hagenaw, 1511).

Secundum miraculum de responsorio Gaude Maria virgo, etc.

Quidam etiam puer fertur quod cum in scholis didicisset istud responsorium Gaude Maria virgo cunctas hereses solas interemisti, etc., quod responsorium cantatur in festo purificationis beate virginis. Et cum pulcra voce per plateas et civium portas hoc decantaret: porrigebantur sibi plurime elemosyne et ciborum reliquie. Iudei autem (quare plurimi in illa ciuitate commorabantur) cum audirent puerum canentem multum dolebant: eoquod matrem Iesu laudaret et iudeos per responsorium hunc confunderet dicens Erubescat iudeus infelix qui dicit christum ex Ioseph semine esse natum. Stomachatus igitur in vicinatu platee: vnus iudeorum cum puerum talia canentem audiret pluries: accessit et vocauit quasi aliquid pomum vel simile se daturum asserendo; et sic promissionibus ac exenijs fructuum ipsum in domum suam aduocauit tanquam si cantum istum ab eo audire, puer simplicitate perditus: secutus est promittentem iudeum. Et mox iste habita opportunitate ipsum puerum in gutture cultro cedendo occidit.

Cumque mater eius vidua paupercula diutius quesitum non inueniret: dictum est a conuicaneis quod visus est a plurimis portas illius iudei intrasse. Sed quid fuerit vel utrum sanus inde exierit: nullus testimonium poterat ferre. Mater ergo iudicem adiit et iudex iudeos coegit, et facta lite: cum probatio incumberet ipsi matri pueri: eoquod contra eam iudei insurrexissent: nec probare quicumque de hac re mater posset: anxia pro filio perditio: in hoc se obligauit quod requirerentur omnes domus iudeorum: etsi inueniretur apud eos suus filius deperditus omnes iudei comburerentur. aut si non: mulier ipsa calumnie conuicta combureretur. Quod cum placuisset

¹I have been unable to identify the *Historia Annunciationis B. V.* here referred to as the source of this version. I suspect that it was a fifteenth century compilation similar in character to Franciscus de Retza's *Historia Conceptionis B. M. V.*, otherwise known as the *Defensio immaculatae conceptionis B. M. V.*, printed in 1470.

iudeis et iudices approbassent. Ecce quesitione facta : nullibi *compertus* est apud iudeos puer occisus : qui *tamen* sub modio iacebat occultatus in conclau. Tunc mulier lata *sententia* ad cremandum ducitur ab *omni* populo. exultant iudei. *compatiuntur* et dolent noti christiani ac vicini. *scilicet*. mulieris illius. plurimum quoque plorat ipsa *quare* perduto filio : seipsam etiam amiserit.

Cumque nullum haberet refrigerium *quare* insultantibus iudeis tanque victoribus ; ad incendium duci cogeatur. sic educendo cum prope ecclesiam beate virginis peruenisset : atque recordata de beata virgine inuocaret ipsam lachrymabiliter : cepit audire dulces sonos acsi filius suus cantaret illud *responsorium* solitum. *scilicet*. Gaude Maria virgo, etc. Cepitque pretendere collum et populum commonere si audirent. Et ecce omnes audientes populi cantum : commoti sunt et illuc accesserunt ubi audiebatur vox sonare. Et sic compererunt *quare* in domo illius iudei sub modio absconsus fuerat puer occisus. subleuantes modium : viderunt puerum in gutture cruentatum cum angelis pluribus dulciter illud *responsorium* concinentem. Quo viso miraculo et puero interrogato ac omnia facta enarrante per ordinem. *scilicet*. quomodo per beatam virginem fuerit sanatus in gutture vulnerato : et dulciter inter angelorum agmina fatus. Ecce omnes in laudem beate virginis christiani proruperunt : et iudeos combusserunt : ac puerum sanum matri restituerunt. Sicque precibus et meritis beate virginis saluata est mulier et filius.¹

14. *Magnum Speculum Exemplorum*, B. Maria Virgo, Exemplum xxx (Ed. Colvener, 1611, p. 650).

This version is a reprint of that in the *Speculum Exemplorum*, with the alteration of scarcely a word. I have not thought it necessary, therefore, to give the text here.

15. J. Collin de Plancy, *Légendes des Saintes Images de Notre Seigneur de la Sainte Vierge et des Saints*, Paris, 1862. "L'Enfant de Choeur," p. 218 ff.

The author says that this miracle (which he selects from a great number of similar wonders) occurred at DuPuy in the year 1325. For lack of space I must content myself with

¹ Pelbartus was a Hungarian friar of the Franciscan order. The full title of his book runs : *Pomerium Sermonum de beata virgine dei genetrice, vel Stellarium Corone beate virginis pro singularum festiuitatum eiusdem predicationibus coaptatum*. The earliest edition, according to Hain, was printed at Hagenaw, 1498.

giving an abstract of the story.¹ There was a choirboy in the cathedral of Notre Dame who was devoted to the Virgin and sang her anthems so sweetly that all rejoiced to hear. On Christmas Eve, leaving the church at the close of the services, he disappeared and could not be found. His parents, the clergy, and the citizens searched for him in vain. He had been seized and murdered while passing through a dark street, by a Jew who had been angered at hearing his song of the birth of Christ. The body was buried by the Jew with all secrecy. On Palm Sunday, as the boys of the choir were marching through the streets in procession, chanting Hosannas, the slain child suddenly emerged from the grave and took his place among them. He told the story of the murder and pointed out the assassin, who was forthwith stoned by the mob. Report of the miracle came to the king, Charles the Fair, who made an investigation and as a consequence expelled the Jews from DuPuy.

Lydgate's story² (Harl. ms. 2251, fol. 70), printed under the title, "The Monk who Honoured the Virgin,"³ is not at all an analogue of the *Prioresses Tale*, but is a distinct legend, found in many collections of miracles of Our Lady. Lydgate takes the story, as he tells us himself, from the *Speculum Historiale* of Vincent de Beauvais (Lib. VII, cap. 116).

Though these narratives—I do not include Lydgate, of

¹ The full text has been copied for me through the kindness of Dr. Fuller.

² Horstman is doubtless right in thinking that this poem by Lydgate, written in the same metre as the *Prioresses Tale*, was an imitation of Chaucer's poem. Hoccleve likewise paid the *Prioresses Tale* the tribute of an imitation. Curiously enough in one manuscript of the *Canterbury Tales* (Christ Church ms. CLII) Hoccleve's legend of the Virgin and her sleeveless garment has been fitted out with a prologue and introduced into the fellowship of the Canterbury company as the *Ploughman's Tale* (*A New Ploughman's Tale*, Ed. A. Beatty, Chaucer Soc'y, 1902).

³ *Originals and Analogues*, pp. 286-8.

course—present a wide variety of setting and detail, we have recorded in each the murder of a boy by the Jews because he sang an anthem in praise of the Virgin, and the miracle which our Lady wrought in his case. This constitutes the kernel of the story, and this serves to distinguish this legend from the host of others in the collections of Marian miracles.

Four of the versions in the foregoing list date from the thirteenth century. But the starting-point of the legend must be placed still earlier. For these thirteenth-century versions, when compared, exhibit such wide divergence that it is impossible to regard any one of them as the original of the others. Moreover, the question of dates forbids us to fix upon any of the versions before us as the common original. Thus, take the two which head the list: Gautier de Coincy wrote his *Miracles de la Sainte Vierge* while he was Prior of Vic, an office which he held from 1214 to 1233. But Caesarius of Heisterbach began his collection as early as 1225¹, and the mention of the *Libri VIII Miraculorum* in 1237, in the *Epistula Catalogica* of his works, would indicate that by that time the collection was already completed.² These two versions are thus so nearly synchronous that unless there were explicit evidence of dependence one would hesitate to assume that either author knew the other's work. A comparison of the two versions, however, fails to disclose any direct relationship between them; and, on the other hand, there are many important differences.

The origin of the legend, then, we must refer to some version earlier than any yet discovered—a version which can hardly have been later than the twelfth century. The home of the legend may be fixed with some probability either in Germany or in the Netherlands. The geographical distribu-

¹ Cf. Lib. I, No. 16, Ed. Meister, p. 25.

² For discussion of the date of the *Lib. VIII Miracul.* see further Meister, pp. xxxvi-vii.

tion of such versions as are known certainly points in this direction. One of the earliest is that of the German Cistercian, Cæsarius of Heisterbach, who, as Mussafia remarks, seems to have gathered his materials in large part from local tradition.¹ Thomas Cantimpré wrote his *Liber de Apibus* at the Dominican priory in the suburbs of Louvain, and definitely localizes many of his stories in Flanders. Coming to some of the later versions, our legend is found in the library at Metz, in a manuscript of the end of the fourteenth century; it occurs again in the collection of miracles in Netherlandish of the fifteenth century; it was also related in the fifteenth century by Herolt, the Belgian Dominican, and by the Hungarian Franciscan, Pelbartus. On the other hand, the collections of Marian legends made in France afford few versions of this story until a comparatively late date; and in England I cannot find evidence of it before the fourteenth century.

With this conjecture as to its probable home, I leave the question of the genesis of the legend. The wide variety of setting which meets us even in the versions of the thirteenth century makes it impossible to work out their exact relation to the parent version. Indeed, these changes of incident and detail suggest that the authors of these thirteenth century collections became acquainted with this legend through oral transmission. Certainly this miracle in its shifting form is in striking contrast to others which travelled through the legendary and example-books with the variation of scarcely an incident.

Let us turn now to the subsequent history of the legend,

¹ "Die meisten jedoch sind ihm eigen; sie tragen mehr den Charakter localer Sagen und fanden in die vulgären Literaturen keinen Eingang" (II, p. 57). Mussafia is here referring, it is true, to the Marian legends in the *Dialogus*, another work by Cæsarius. But his remark is of equal importance in considering the sources of the *Libri VIII Miraculorum*.

with the particular purpose of tracing its development to the form of the story told by Chaucer.

On comparing these versions it will be seen that they fall at once into two distinct groups. According to the first, which I shall designate Group A, the story ends happily. After being revived by Our Lady, the boy continues to live. Though nothing is known of his later life, Gautier tells us, it is to be presumed that both he and his mother continued to serve the Virgin devoutly. Mielot says that he grew up to be a bishop. To this "happy-ending group" belong all the versions except the *Paris Beggar-Boy*, the *Prioresses Tale* and *Alfonsus of Lincoln*. In these three, which I call Group B, the story ends tragically. The whole scene, after the discovery of the body, is funereal. Though by a miracle the child continues to sing, yet he is placed on a bier, and the mother follows weeping. Indeed, in the *Paris Beggar-Boy* and *Alfonsus of Lincoln* the boy was not actually restored to life at all; it was his corpse which sang.¹ Chaucer does not go so far; the clergeon testifies:

And as by wey of kynde,
I sholde haue deyed, ye, longe tyme agoon.

But in all three of these versions the miracle did not result in the young saint's restoration. As soon as the magical stone, or grain, or flower, was removed from the boy's mouth the song ceased forever and the corpse was buried with the honors appropriate to a martyr.

There are still other significant differences which separate these two Groups. In each of the versions of Group B, the miracle is effected by means of a magical object which the

¹ Note particularly *Paris B. B.*, vv. 128, 132, and 141. Cf. also *Alfons. of Linc.*: "Nec vnquam cessabat a cantu illo dulcissimo, licet mortuus foret." Again, in the boy's account of the miracle: "Vt non cessaret mortuus ab eius laude."

Virgin places in the mouth of the corpse. In Group A, on the other hand, no mention is made of any magical object. Moreover, the anthem which the child sings is the *Alma Redemptoris* in each version of Group B, but in none of the versions of Group A.

There can be no doubt that the "happy-ending" story of Group A represents the earlier form of the legend. This conclusion—inherently probable on the ground of greater simplicity—is established by the fact that, whereas several versions of this group are found in the thirteenth century, no version of Group B appears until the second half of the fourteenth century.

Having observed the distinct line of cleavage between the two groups, we may now proceed to consider a little more closely the relations between the several versions of Group A. Without entering upon a tedious comparison of minute details, it is evident, I think, that these "happy-ending" versions arrange themselves in several clearly defined subdivisions.

In the first place, MS. 14,857, John Herolt, and the *Speculum Exemplorum* are linked together by certain features of the story not found elsewhere.

1. The mother of the young saint is not even mentioned. In all the others (except the two French prose versions, which will be discussed presently) she is a conspicuous figure.

2. Our Lady, reviving the child, sends him back to the church to sing her anthem as before his murder. The Jew hears the song again from the church, and on investigation, is astounded to find his victim alive and well as ever. Thus in their account of the discovery of the miracle these versions differ radically from the others.

Such striking peculiarities warrant the grouping of these versions in a separate class. To this class also belonged, no doubt, the story in the *Historia annunciationis B. V.*, from which the account in the *Speculum Exemplorum* was

taken. We may suppose, then, that Herolt and the author of the *Historia annunciationis* depended more or less directly upon the version in ms. 14,857.¹

Another branch of Group A is represented by Gautier de Coincy, ms. 18,134, and Pelbartus. According to each of these versions the boy receives alms from those who hear him singing in the streets. This is a detail not found elsewhere in Group A.² The relation of these three versions to one another is particularly interesting. Let us first compare Gautier's French poem with ms. 18,134, to which it clearly stands in close relationship of some sort. If we leave out of account the characteristic elaborations of Gautier's narrative, it will be seen that the French poem corresponds to the Latin text incident for incident. One even finds that in these two, though in no other version, the boy is killed with an axe. These correspondences may be explained in two ways: ms. 18,134 may be regarded as a condensed version of Gautier, or, on the other hand, one may take the Latin text as representing essentially the source on which Gautier based his amplified poetical rendering of the story.³ The latter view, in my opinion, is more likely. In the first place, Gautier is known to have gathered the material for his *Miracles de la Sainte Vierge* from various Latin compilations.⁴ Again, Gautier's narrative is in some points confused and involved,

¹ Not necessarily, of course, upon this particular ms. It will be remembered that several mss. of this version are still in existence.

² It occurs also in the *Paris Beggar-Boy*, but I defer the consideration of this until I come to speak of Group B.

³ It is not necessary, according to this hypothesis, to suppose that Gautier used this identical manuscript. ms. 18,134, though of the 13th century, is probably not old enough for that. The date of the ms., however, is no obstacle to the supposition that it preserves essentially the version which Gautier used as his source.

⁴ G. Paris, *La Litt. Française au Moyen Age*, 1890, p. 206; cf. G. Servois, *Bibl. de l'école des chartes*, series IV, vol. III, p. 41.

whereas the Latin text is direct and consistent throughout. Note, for example, that in Gautier's poem the mother hysterically denounces the Jews as the murderers of her child before the crime has been discovered. The French poet, moreover, shows a tendency to multiply wonders. When the child is recovered, wrapped about his head is found a paper containing a convenient account of the miracle—an absurd detail absent from the Latin version. Finally, it may be pointed out that though there are repeated cases in which this legend passed from Latin to the vernacular, this would be the only instance in which the process was reversed. MS. 18,134, then, we may conclude, gives us a form of the story older than the French poem, and represents essentially the source used by Gautier.

This conclusion is confirmed when we turn to Pelbartus. Though this fifteenth century Latin version clearly belongs in this class, it entirely lacks the elaborations added to the legend by Gautier. Instead, it reads like an expansion of the account in MS. 18,134. Pelbartus introduces a new incident: the mother's peril. To secure an order from the justice for the search of the Jew's house, she is obliged to put her own life in jeopardy in case the child should not be found there. But, aside from this device to heighten the interest of the story, the version of Pelbartus corresponds closely enough to the thirteenth-century Latin text. We have, then, in Pelbartus another descendant from the Latin version on which Gautier based his poem.

We come at length to the third class of Group A, represented by Caesarius, Egerton MS. 1117, and possibly also the Hague MS. The version of Caesarius is most important for our purpose inasmuch as it approaches in some striking details the form of the story found in the *Prioresses Tale*. These agreements will be more fully considered when we come to examine Group B. By Caesarius the story

is much more definitely connected with a school. The boy sings his anthem on his way to and from school; the mother goes first to the school to search for him; it is the school-master who first suspects the Jew of the murder and lays information before the authorities. None of these details are found in any other version of Group A. Moreover, in *Cæsarius* the body is buried in a stable under the manure. (Cf. the "jakes" of Group B).

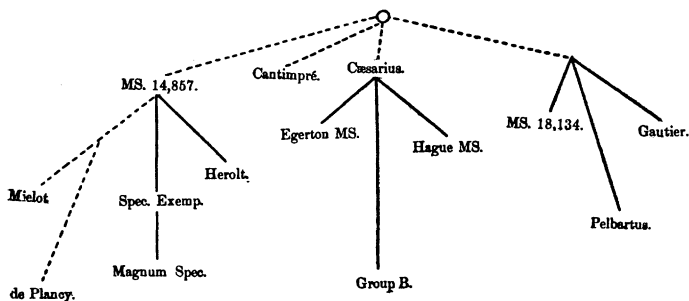
In the Egerton MS. the story is condensed to such an extent that details are for the most part excluded. But here, as in *Cæsarius*, the body is buried beneath the manure of the stable. This is sufficient, I think, to establish the connection of this version with that of *Cæsarius*. As to the source of the account in the Hague MS., I am by no means certain. The fragment of the text which I have before me does not afford any decisive test, though it seems to resemble *Cæsarius* rather than any of the other early versions. Therefore I classify it here, though doubtfully.

The extremely brief version of Thomas Cantimpré seems to belong in a class by itself. It differs from all others in describing the child as buried in a cemetery. The author tells us that he had the story by word of mouth. This may account for his variation from the usual setting. But since no other account shows any trace of dependence on Cantimpré the question of his source is not an important one.

We have now completed the examination of all the versions of Group A except the two French prose accounts: one by Mielot in the fifteenth century, the other by Collin de Plancy in the nineteenth. Both these depart so widely from all other versions that it is difficult to classify them. Nor does de Plancy seem to have derived his account from Mielot, for the latter says that the boy was killed by being tumbled into a well, whereas de Plancy, in this particular, adheres to the older form of the story. According to both, the boy was

discovered months after his murder, on the occasion of a great fête. The fact that neither version introduces the mother of the child into the scene would seem to relate them to the MS. 14,857-Herolt-*Speculum* group rather than to the others. One may conjecture perhaps that they have been derived—perhaps through several intermediaries—from the form of the story represented by MS. 14,857. But for our purpose it is unnecessary to inquire into the sources of these late French versions. They may be dismissed as variants which stand in no direct relation to the versions with which we are concerned.

To sum up the results of our examination of Group A, the probable relationship of the several versions may be indicated by the following diagram. It should be understood that connecting lines drawn between versions are not intended to imply immediate dependence, but only to indicate relationship. In many cases, doubtless, there were other intermediary versions.



We are ready now to examine the versions of Group B, in which the legend has been modified by substituting the tragic ending. At once we are confronted by the question:

How came this tragic ending to be introduced into the story? The explanation is found, I believe, by supposing that in Group B the legend of the boy put to death for singing anthems has been affected by the well-known story of Hugh of Lincoln.

In origin, of course, the two stories were quite distinct. The martyrdom of Hugh—always localized at Lincoln—is recorded by Matthew of Paris and by the annalists of Burton and Waverly as occurring in the year 1255,¹ a quarter of a century later than the earliest versions of the other legend. Moreover, the two stories differ most essentially:

1. The story of the boy killed for singing anthems belongs to the cycle of miracles of the Virgin. Hugh of Lincoln, on the other hand, is not—at least in its essence—a miracle at all; nor does the Virgin play any part in it.

¹ One can't help suspecting that the martyrdom of little Hugh is after all only a second edition of the similar story of William of Norwich which sprang up in 1144 (Cf. A. Jessopp, "St. William of Norwich," *Nineteenth Century*, xxxiii, 1893, pp. 749 ff., and the *Nova Legenda Anglie*, Ed. C. Horstman, Oxford, 1901, II, p. 452). How the story arose is not, however, a matter which concerns us here. For our purpose the essential point is that the story of Hugh of Lincoln was well known in the 13th and 14th centuries; it is related in the *Annales de Waverleia* (Rolls Series, pp. 346-8), in the *Annales de Burton* (Rolls Series, pp. 340-5), by Matthew Paris (*Chronica Majora*, Rolls Series, v, pp. 516-9), and by John of Tynemouth in his *Sanctilogium Angliæ, Scotiæ et Hiberniæ*, written shortly before 1350 (Tynemouth's collection was afterwards incorporated in Capgrave's *Nova Legenda Anglie*, recently edited by Horstman. The story of Hugh will be found in Vol. II, p. 39). It was also the subject of an Anglo-French poem, *Hugues de Lincoln*, (Ed. F. Michel, Paris, 1834).

For further bibliography in regard to Hugh of Lincoln and similar stories the reader is referred to Professor Child's introduction to the Ballad of the Jew's Daughter (*English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, No. 155, vol. III, pp. 235 ff.). Professor Child recognizes in the mention of "Our Lady's draw-well," in one version of the ballad, "a mixing, to this extent, of the story of Hugh with that of the young devotee of the Virgin who is celebrated in Chaucer's Prioresses Tale." But he does not enter into the question of the relationship of the Prioresses Tale to the story of Hugh of Lincoln.

2. In both the motive for the murder and the method of its accomplishment, the two narratives are unlike. Hugh was slain without any provocation, merely in accordance with the custom of the Jews (so it was believed) of capturing from time to time a Christian child and putting him to death in mockery of Christ's passion. And thus Hugh, according to all the versions, was crucified. In the other legend, on the contrary, the method of death is never crucifixion.

3. In none of the accounts of Hugh of Lincoln is he represented as singing anthems.

4. The discovery of the body of the murdered child is effected by different means in the two stories.

5. Finally, Hugh of Lincoln was never revived after his murder.

But though there are such wide differences between the two legends it will be seen that they possess certain common features which made it easy for one to affect the other. In the first place, both were stories of the murder of a Christian child by the Jews. Again, both stories presented the same situation of a distracted mother, who searches for her child, and at length learns that he was last seen entering the house of a Jew.

These striking similarities of situation, then, led to the introduction of certain elements from the Hugh story into our legend. In Group B practically the whole scene after the recovery of the child's body has been taken over from the legend of Hugh. The body is laid on a bier, the mother weeps, a solemn procession, headed by the bishop, bears the corpse to the cathedral; finally, the remains of the young martyr are enclosed in a splendid tomb of marble. It will be observed also that the rigorous punishment of the Jews, which in Group B follows the discovery of their crime, closely parallels the vengeance taken upon them for the murder of Hugh. According to Cæsarius and the majority of ver-

sions of Group A, on the other hand, the Jews are converted as a result of the miracle, and their lives are spared.

The Hugh of Lincoln story, then, enables us to account satisfactorily for the changed form of our legend as we meet it in Group B. It is necessary now to inquire as to the relationship between the three versions of this group. An independent variation of these versions from the form of the story found in Group A is clearly out of the question. That they agree in substituting the tragic ending, in adding the incident of the magical object placed in the boy's mouth by the Virgin, and in changing the anthem which the boy sang from *Gaude Maria* to *Alma Redemptoris* can only be explained by supposing, either that one of the three versions of this group served as the original of the other two, or that the three depended on a common source. Let us first consider the former of these alternatives.

It would be pleasant if the student of Chaucer might regard the tragic ending (as Professor Skeat apparently does)¹ as Chaucer's own substitution for the "inartistic ending" of the earlier versions. But against this is the fact that the tragic ending is found in the *Paris Beggar-Boy*, which according to universal opinion is earlier than the *Prioresses Tale*. On the basis of dates, then, the only existing version which could be credited with first introducing the elements borrowed from Hugh of Lincoln is the *Paris Beggar-Boy*. But a closer examination of this version makes it clear, I think, that it was not the source upon which Chaucer and the author of *Alfonsus of Lincoln*² depended. It will perhaps suffice to note here a single point

¹ *Academy*, Sept. 1, 1894, p. 153.

² In a later note (p. 512, note 1) I call attention to the extreme improbability that Alfonsus a Spina took his story from a version in English. What is there said against his dependence on Chaucer would apply, perhaps with greater force, to the possibility that he borrowed from the Vernon MS.

of difference. In the *Prioresses Tale* and *Alfonsus of Lincoln* the hero is a school-boy;¹ in *Paris Beggar-Boy*, on the other hand, he is a street-singer. This is more than a casual difference of detail, for it carries with it an important change in the setting of the story. Moreover, Chaucer and the author of *Alfonsus*, in making the hero of their story a school-boy, are in agreement with the majority of the versions of Group A, particularly that of Cæsarius. From this it seems to follow that they were not depending on the *Paris Beggar-Boy*. As the common source of Group B, therefore, we are obliged to suppose a version no longer extant, or at least not now known, which for convenience I shall call X.

This X, I conceive to have been a Latin version written in England. In the first place, the introduction of features borrowed from the Hugh of Lincoln—which according to hypothesis is to be credited to X—would point toward England. Again, all three versions of Group B are in one way or another attached to English soil. Two of them are in English; and the third, *Alfonsus of Lincoln*, though written in Spain, is placed in an English setting, for it is introduced into the *Fortalicium Fidei* in connection with an account of a persecution of the Jews in England.² That X was a Latin version may be inferred with even greater confidence. For only through the medium of Latin would the

¹ In a recent article ("Chaucer's Littel Clergeon," *Mod. Philol.*, vol. III, 1906, p. 468) I endeavored to make it clear that the hero of the *Prioresses Tale* was not a chorister but an ordinary school-boy. This is confirmed by comparing Chaucer's account on this point with the older versions of the legend.

² This account, it may be remarked, strikingly resembles the persecution which, according to the monastic chroniclers, followed the martyrdom of Hugh of Lincoln. This has some significance, it seems to me, as a further indication that in X (the source of *Alfonsus*) there was a fusion of elements from the two legends.

story have been at all likely to come into the hands of Alphonsus a Spina.

Inasmuch as version X was the immediate source used by Chaucer, it becomes a matter of some importance to determine as closely as possible the form of the story which it presented. And, having now before us, on the one hand the earlier versions of Group A, and on the other the three versions derived from X, it ought to be possible to reconstruct in outline the missing version.

To begin with, to X may be assigned features of the story which are preserved in all three versions of Group B. At the risk of repetition, I recapitulate the more important of these: The body of the murdered child was thrown into a "jakes;" the Virgin appeared to the child and placed in its mouth a magical object—whether flower, stone, or grain, will be considered later—at the same time bidding him sing her anthem; the body on being drawn up was placed on a bier, and carried in solemn procession to the abbey or cathedral; on the removal of the magical object the song ceased; the corpse was interred in a marble tomb with great ceremony; finally, the Jews were apprehended and punished with great severity.¹ Moreover, in X the anthem sung must have been the *Alma Redemptoris*, instead of the *Gaude Maria* of the earlier versions.

Thus far the reconstruction is easy for we are dealing with incidents common to the group. Let us pass on now to details in which the versions of Group B differ.

In the first place, shall we suppose that in X the hero was a schoolboy as in the *Prioresses Tale* and *Alfonsus*, or a street-singer as in *Paris Beggar-Boy*? If we refer to Group A it

¹ *Alfonsus of Lincoln*, as printed in *Originals and Analogues*, does not include this. But in the *Fortalicium Fidei* the account of the punishment of the Jews immediately follows the extract printed.

will be seen that the street-singer tradition appears only in Gautier and the Latin versions, ms. 18,134 and Pelbartus. On the other hand, the boy is a "scholaris" in Cæsarius, Cantimpré, Herolt and the *Speculum Exemplorum*; a "clericus" according to Egerton ms.; a "scolier" in Hague ms.; a "jeusne clerc" in Mielot. Moreover, in Cæsarius, as I have already pointed out, the school is prominently introduced into the setting of the story, in a manner which at once suggests the *Prioresses Tale* and *Alfonsus*. The appearance of this setting in these two versions of Group B is most easily accounted for by supposing that it stood in the source X.¹

How, then, shall we explain the street-singer in the *Paris Beggar-Boy*? If we compare this English version again with the ms. 18,134-Gautier-Pelbartus group we shall see certain other agreements in details not found outside this group. For example, the murderer entices his victim into his house in order to slay him—a touch which is lacking in the *Prioresses Tale* and *Alfonsus*. This is a trifling detail, it may be granted, yet it serves to emphasize the peculiar dependence of the *Paris Beggar-Boy* on this group, as shown in the matter of the street-singer. We are thus driven to the supposition that the author of the poem in the Vernon ms. was acquainted with two forms of the legend—version X and either Gautier or, more probably, a Latin version belonging to the Gautier group—and that he has combined features

¹ I may say at this point that I am unable to accept the view of Professor Skeat that the author of *Alfonsus of Lincoln* was depending on Chaucer's tale. The agreements between the two versions, to be sure, are in many points striking, but they can be explained equally well on the hypothesis of a common source. Furthermore, as I shall proceed to show, the form of the story in the *Fortalicium Fidei* seems more primitive than that in Chaucer. But, above all, is it likely that a Spanish ecclesiastic of the fifteenth century knew the Canterbury Tales, or could have read the language in which they were written?

from both. This is an hypothesis which is always distasteful to one engaged in tracing the filiation of versions, though it is not in itself at all unreasonable. Furthermore, to judge from his workmanship, the unknown author of this Vernon collection was a person perfectly capable of making such combinations. Of his collection of miracles of Our Lady, only a fragment has been preserved in the Vernon MS. But the chapter-headings in the index at the beginning show the scope of the work and testify to the extensive acquaintance of the author with saints' legends. Finally, there is another instance, as I shall show in the next paragraph, in which the author of the *Paris Beggar-Boy* appears to have combined in his narrative an incident drawn from an outside source.

We come next to the matter of the stone, or grain, or flower placed in the boy's mouth. Though here the versions of Group B differ, yet they agree in placing some magical object in the child's mouth—a detail of the story not found outside of Group B. Clearly, then, X must have contained this incident in some form. But was it the stone, the grain, or the flower?

According to the *Paris Beggar-Boy* there was found in the child's mouth a lily on which was written in golden letters, "Alma redemptoris mater."¹ This is a familiar

¹ Professor Skeat makes a slip here. Referring to the account in the Vernon MS., he says: "In this version, it is not the grain that is found in the child's mouth, but the original rose; or rather, the original rose multiplied by five. For one fresh red rose was found in his mouth, two in his eyes, and two in his ears! We now know whence these roses sprang." (*Academy*, Sept. 1, 1894, p. 153; cf. also *Oxford Chaucer*, Vol. v, p. 491). But this is not the story of the Vernon MS., which gives us neither one rose nor five, but a lily. Professor Skeat has accidentally turned the page of his copy of *Originals and Analogues* to Lydgate's miracle, "The Monk who Honoured the Virgin." Accordingly his attempt to derive this incident in the Vernon MS. from the rose legend of Gautier de Coincy comes to nothing.

story in the collections of miracles of Our Lady, but nowhere except in the Vernon MS. is it connected with the story of the boy killed by the Jews. Cæsarius of Heisterbach relates this miracle—exactly as in the Vernon MS., except that the lily bore the words “Ave Maria”—of a certain knight who became a Cistercian,¹ and it is borrowed from Cæsarius without change in the *Legenda Aurea*.² Moreover, elsewhere the author of *Paris Beggar-Boy* related this very story of a monk, this time with “Ave Maria” inscribed on the lily.³ It is clear, therefore, that we are to regard the lily with the legend “Alma redemptoris mater” as a feature borrowed from another Marian legend and adapted to its present setting in the *Paris Beggar-Boy*. I think it altogether likely that the introduction of this feature is to be credited to the author of the Vernon collection himself, who, as we have seen above, shows independence in combining material drawn from more than one source.

Let us turn next to the *Prioresses Tale*. According to Chaucer, Our Lady placed a grain upon the boy’s tongue. This is an incident which, so far as I am aware, cannot be paralleled in any Marian legend. But, as Professor Skeat has already pointed out,⁴ Chaucer may easily have taken the suggestion for this detail from the legend of Adam and Seth.⁵ Chaucer, then, as well as the author of *Paris Beggar-Boy*, has chosen to insert in the story at this point an incident borrowed from a foreign source.

But why should both authors have wished to substitute something else for what they found in their text? The answer to this question is obvious if we assume that, in this

¹ *Libri VIII Miraculorum*, p. 195.

² Cap. LI.

³ Cf. *Originals and Analogues*, p. 279, No. 16.

⁴ *Academy*, ut supra.

⁵ Cf. *Legends of the Holy Rood*, E. E. T. S., p. 70; *Early South Engl. Legendary*, E. E. T. S., p. 7; *Cursor Mundi*, E. E. T. S., vv. 1369-76.

matter, *Alfonsus of Lincoln* represents the form of the story which stood in X. The device of inserting a precious stone in place of the tongue which had been cut out is not a happy one, even though it may have been intended to account for the sweetness of the young martyr's song. Now the author of *Paris Beggar-Boy*, as Horstman points out, was by no means lacking in literary art. Both he and Chaucer were dissatisfied with this crude device; each, therefore, in his own way, replaced this objectionable detail by an incident originally foreign to the story.

In supposing that *Alfonsus of Lincoln*, in the matter of the gem-tongue, preserves essentially the reading of X, there is a difficulty which I will not evade. The bestowal of the precious stone in place of the tongue necessarily supposes that the tongue had been cut out. But if this was the form of the story in X, how comes it that neither Chaucer nor the author of the Vernon MS. represents the boy's tongue as cut out, but tell us instead that his throat was cut? In this difficulty, of course, there is nothing inherently insuperable. A whole series of possible hypotheses might be devised to solve it.¹ But to such speculations without further facts to support them, one might well reply:

This is ignotum per ignotius.

The authority of *Alfonsus of Lincoln*, however, is not the only consideration which inclines me to believe that the tongue-cutting actually stood in X. This very detail, it will be remembered, occurs also in the version of Cæsarius of Heisterbach, which of all the early versions approaches most

¹ If anyone should be disposed to argue that Chaucer had the Vernon MS. before him, I should not dispute such a possibility. On this, however, I insist: that the *Paris Beggar-Boy* alone will not account for the form of the story told by the Prioress. In that case, how does it happen that Chaucer agrees with the other versions in making his hero a school-boy?

closely the form of the story which Chaucer must have had before him. The miracle collections of Cæsarius enjoyed the widest popularity, in England as well as on the Continent, down to the fifteenth century.¹ There is nothing unlikely, therefore, in the supposition that the author of X used Cæsarius as his source. Moreover, in that case we may even find a reason for the addition in X of the object placed in the young martyr's mouth. "How was it possible," pondered this rationalistic recorder of miracles, "for the boy to sing after his tongue was gone?" Accordingly, Our Lady appears to him and inserts a precious stone in place of the tongue!

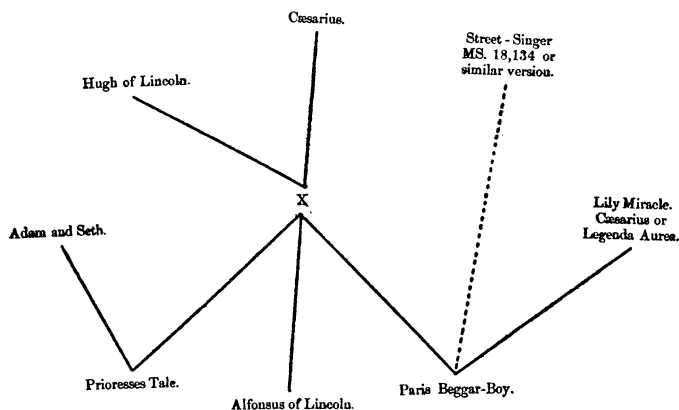
In the course of our attempt to reconstruct the form of the story in the missing X, we have had occasion more than once to note the fact that the account by Cæsarius supplies a parallel to Group B in details which are found in no other early version. Still other parallels may be noted here. In Cæsarius the child sings his anthem as he passes through Jewry on his way to and from school (Cf. *Prioresses Tale* and *Alfonsus*); the body is buried under the manure of the stable (Cf. the "jakes" of Group B); the mother waits all night for her missing child and in the morning goes first to the school to inquire for him (cf. *Prioresses Tale* and *Alfonsus*). Indeed, Cæsarius + Hugh of Lincoln will account for every element of the story in X, except the placing of the magical object in the boy's mouth, and this may have been added in X for the reason suggested above.

That between Cæsarius and X there may have been inter-

¹ Thus in Part I. of the 15th century treatise known as *Jacob's Well* (E. T. S., 1904) I count no less than nineteen miracles expressly quoted from Cæsarius. And in the *Alphabet of Tales* (E. E. T. S., 1904-05) out of 801 stories, 133 are taken from Cæsarius—a far larger number than from any other single author. Compare also the stories from Cæsarius in English treatises which have been ascribed to Richard Rolle (*R. Rolle of Hampole*, Ed. Horstman, vol. i, pp. 157, 192, 193).

mediate versions, I would not deny. I affirm merely that we are not required to assume any intermediate version in order to account for the development of the story to the form which it assumes in Group B. Cæsarius's collections of miracles enjoyed wide popularity; there is nothing improbable, therefore, in supposing that the author of X was acquainted with them at first hand. And, generally speaking, the simplest explanation which will account for the facts is to be preferred.

Let me sum up the conclusions in regard to the versions of Group B by resorting again to a diagram :



The result of this examination of the legend told by the Prioress exactly accords with what one would expect from observing Chaucer's methods in the case of other Tales. Practically nothing in the plot of the legend is his own invention. But no one, I trust, will so far misunderstand my intentions in pointing out this fact as to accuse me of assailing the poet's originality. It did not require originality of a very high order to invent a saint's legend, as everyone must feel after ploughing through the huge collections of mediæval

miracles. Chaucer's originality was of an altogether different kind. And nothing, in my opinion, helps us better to appreciate exactly in what this contribution of his own genius consisted, than to compare the *Prioresses Tale* with such a story as *Alfonsus of Lincoln*, which, as we now see, corresponds essentially to the form of the legend which he used as his source. One is the skeleton, complete in every limb ; the other is flesh and blood.

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